THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The Hon'ble High Court, in its order dated 27.10.99, in WP(C) No. 2560/97 has directed, inter alia, that the Government should follow their own guidelines and any allotment outside the existing guidelines be made only with the approval of the Cabinet Committee and after intimation to the Court.

(c) Follow up action is being taken in accordance with the orders of the Hon'ble Court.

Reduction in Import of Newsprint

*316. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plan of Government to reduce import of newsprint in this country;

(b) if so, what is the exact plan; and

(c) the reasons to import so much of newsprint?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) Newsprint is classified under Exim code sub-heading 48.01 and import is permitted without an import license, subject to Actual User condition, by those holding "Registration Certificate" issued by the Registrar of News Papers for India (RNI), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. The demand of newsprint in the Country is met both by import and indigenous production and the quantum of imports in a particular year is dependent on the demand and supply position. However, a number of steps have been taken to increase the indigenous production of newsprint so that dependence on imported newsprint reduces gradually. These steps include the following:

(1) Newsprint Industry has been delicensed.

(2) Newsprint has been exempted from excise duty.

(3) There is a concessional rate of Custom Duty @ 5% on pulp for manufacture of newsprint.

(4) With a view to increasing the indigenous availability of newsprint, paper mills producing newsprint conforming to BIS standards are placed in Schedule I of the Newsprint Control Order, 1962, declaring them as mills manufacturing newsprint.

Central Aid to the Institutes working for Poor in Chamoli (U.P.)

*317. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Member of Parliament has forwarded a case regarding Central aid to the institutes working for the poor in the District Chamoli, U.P. on the 10th June, 1999;

(b) whether the Government of Uttar Pradesh has forwarded a case of M/s. Naveen Institute of Computer Education vide letter No. 168/26-2-99/11/54/99, dated 24th April, 1999 for the Central grant; and

(c) if so, the detailf thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) This Ministry had received the case of Naveen Institute of Computer Education from the Government of Uttar Pradesh vide their letter No. 168/26-2-99/11/54/99, dated 6th April, 1999 (not 24th April, 1999) for the grant. The case was considered and could not be acceded to. The organization was informed on 17th November, 1999 accordingly.

Export of Software

*318 SHRI DINA NATH MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the extent of export of software during the current financial year;

(b) the States from where the software has been exported, together with the quantum thereof; and

(c) the quantum of software exported from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh during the current financial year?